

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

GOSSE COURT ARMORY BURLINGTON, VERMONT



Property Details

Property Address:	126 Gosse Court, Burlington, Vermont
Property Size:	1.0 acre
Former Use:	Farm, Vermont Army National Guard Facility
Contaminants Found:	Lead, Asbestos
Current Use:	Robert Miller Community & Recreation Center, Sarah Holbrook New North End Teen Center
Current Owner:	City of Burlington, Vermont

Project Partners

Amy Tarrant Foundation, Burlington Department of Parks and Recreation, Burlington residents, City of Burlington, R.E.M Development Company, Sarah Holbrook New North End Teen Center, Vermont Army National Guard, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Drivers for Redevelopment: The Gosse Court Armory is located north of the central business district and between Burlington’s New North End, one of its most affluent communities, and the Old North End, one of its oldest, most densely populated and diverse communities. The Old North End is characterized by low-income and affordable housing – as a Vermont Refugee Resettlement Community, many global refugees call the Old North End home.

In 2004, with the closing of the Gosse Court Armory, several state, local and community leaders engaged in conversations with the Vermont National Guard over the potential repurposing of the Armory as a needed community recreation center. From 2005-2007, the Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, Citizen Advisory Groups, state and local governments, nonprofits, and neighborhood residents engaged in a community-driven process to develop and design a plan for the center recommending the Armory be repurposed for a multi-use community and recreation center. In 2008, long-time Burlington resident Robert Miller, President of R.E.M. Development Company, graciously agreed to donate his time and labor to manage the entire renovation project.

Property History: In 1958, the 42,558-square feet Gosse Court Armory was built by the State of Vermont on a former farm. For the past 14 years, the nonprofit organization Sara Holbrook North End Teen Center provided programs for at-risk youth out of the Armory. After the Armory’s closure, the state transferred the building and its land to the city allowing the Teen Center to stay open. Due to age and prior training activities, such as the firing range, there were concerns of possible onsite environmental contamination.

The City of Burlington utilized funding from an EPA Brownfields grant to conduct assessments which revealed lead paint and asbestos contamination of the building and the soil closest to the building was contaminated with lead. With funding assistance from the Vermont National Guard, cleanup activities were completed by ATC Associates in August 2008 and included the removal of: asbestos and lead dust

Funding Details

EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant:	\$63,000
Vermont Army National Guard:	\$20,000
Public and Private Donors:	\$1,200,000

Project Highlights

- Assessment and cleanup activities removed the final barrier to sustainable reuse allowing a community-driven and led project to move forward
- Leveraged \$20,000 for cleanup activities from Vermont Army National Guard and over \$1.2 million for redevelopment through fundraising, private donors and public dollars
- Transformed the Gosse Court Armory building into a community-wide asset and demonstrated Burlington’s commitment to sustainable practices through adaptive reuse as a community and recreation center and incorporation of green infrastructure elements such as a separate stormwater treatment system including swells and natural wetland area, and pervious concrete walkways.

from the building, an underground storage tank, and lead contaminated soil—which was restored with clean material.

Project Results: The former Gosse Court Armory was fully renovated as a 20,000-square foot community and recreation center outfitted with high energy efficient heating and lighting systems designed to reduce the center’s carbon footprint and long-term operating costs. This \$1.2 million project includes a full size gymnasium, 130-person community room, children’s space, teen center, fitness room, programs for seniors, arts and crafts room, warming kitchen and other multi-purpose rooms. The center helps meet the demand for indoor recreation in Burlington, and already attracts thousands of users from all ages and interests. The Sarah Holbrook New North End Teen Center continues its invaluable services from the center. In addition, there is space for lease with a separate entrance to an organization in the business of child care, health care or government. The city and its citizens renamed the Armory, the Robert Miller Community and Recreation Center as a tribute to his contribution to it and other projects in Burlington. Through shared vision, philanthropy and community leadership, a brownfield was transformed into a community asset offering something of interest to everyone and creating life-long value and opportunities for generations to come.

Project Timeline

December 3, 2004	Phase I Assessment Completed
February 2, 2005	Phase II Assessment Completed
June 28, 2005	Additional Soil Sampling Completed
August 2008	Cleanup Completed
November 2008	Armory Renovation Completed
January 5, 2009	Robert Miller Community & Rec Center Opened